

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending motion to proceed be withdrawn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERLY AND RESPONSIBLE IRAQ REDEPLOYMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008—MOTION TO PROCEED

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to H.R. 4156 and send a cloture motion to the desk and ask that once the motion is stated, the reading of the names be waived, and the motion to proceed be withdrawn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 4156, the Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act, 2008.

Carl Levin, Robert Menendez, Claire McCaskill, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Richard J. Durbin, Tom Carper, Amy Klobuchar, Daniel K. Akaka, Jack Reed, Patty Murray, Sherrod Brown, Frank R. Lautenberg, Charles E. Schumer, Sheldon Whitehouse, Debbie Stabenow, Barbara A. Mikulski, Harry Reid.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, let me say this: Tomorrow morning, the third vote in order is going to be a vote to invoke cloture on the farm bill. My friends on the other side of the aisle, my Republican friends, are near bringing this bill down. That is a shame. All those farm States out there—and there are lots of them—and all those farm communities—and there are lots of them—need to look to the Republicans for killing the farm bill. If they vote, and they should vote cloture to stop this silliness that has been going on now for 10 days, 11 days, they can still offer amendments. Once cloture is invoked, they have the 30 hours to offer amendments. We can enter into an agreement. If they want to spend a half hour on each amendment, 15 minutes to a side, whatever they want to do that is reasonable, but they have been unwilling to be reasonable. I guess they want, as I indicated earlier, the Democrats not to have an accomplishment. But the fault of the farm bill is at their feet. You don't have to look further than down at their feet. They are stopping an important piece of legislation, a bipartisan piece of legislation, and they are doing it for what I believe are very bad motives.

It is a shame. The American farm programs are good programs. This bill

makes them better. Is this bill perfect? Of course not.

I went over the schedule with my staff as to what we can do in December. We don't have the luxury of spending a long time on this farm bill. We could if cloture is invoked. We could come back and finish this bill in a short period of time. If it is not invoked, we are going to be hard pressed to get the farm bill completed very soon.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, tomorrow morning, the national debate on the war in Iraq will continue on the floor of the Senate. The debate has now reached the stage where we are talking about funding for the war. This war, in its fifth year, has claimed almost 3,900 of our best and bravest soldiers. Some 30,000 have been injured, more than 10,000 with amputations, burns, and traumatic brain injuries, serious injuries that they will struggle with for a long time.

Earlier this week, I watched a television documentary. James Gandolfini, who has been in many movies, television documentaries, and shows, interviewed disabled veterans. I believe it was titled "Alive Day Memories." It was a story of how each of these disabled vets from Iraq recalled the day when they believed they had been killed and their lives lost but somehow survived miraculously. They are extraordinary stories of courage, emotional stories about what they went through, and heartbreaking stories about some of the injuries they brought home. They were victims of traumatic brain injury—a young man with a video showing him in his youth with all the strength and vitality one could ask for, now struggling from a wheelchair to speak and to look forward to a life where he can walk and be anywhere near normal; his mother by his side holding his hand to calm him when the emotions overcame him.

There were amputees talking about returning home. Many of them worried about whether they would be accepted. There were some wonderful, heartwarming stories of families who stood by them through this whole struggle and are with them even to this day.

There was a beautiful young woman who was a lieutenant in the Army in her mid-twenties, red hair, as pretty as can be. A rocket-propelled grenade went off right next to her. It blew off her right arm and right shoulder. She showed extraordinary bravery in talking about what she had been through and putting her life together, and then struggled for words when she talked about whether she would ever have a

family, whether she would ever have a child who would look at her as a mother.

I watched that show and thought about my role as a Senator, and I thought about this war. I was 1 of 23 who voted against it in the Senate. It seems so long ago, 5 years. A vote that was at the time politically hard, but a vote that I never ever questioned or regretted.

Now 5 years later, here we are still—still—with these stories, this handful of stories we saw on the documentary just representing a small percentage of the heroism and suffering of this war.

I have had the opportunity to speak with this President directly about these men and women. I have talked with him about Eric Edmundson from North Carolina, a young man, a victim of traumatic brain injury who has become close to me through his family and visited with me just this last week in my office in Washington. I have seen his family up close, and I know the extraordinary love they have for their son and father of their granddaughter. The sacrifices they have made for him, his wife and baby daughter, are extraordinary.

We have a Capitol guide—I wish I knew his name, and I will make it a point of finding it out—who makes a special effort to offer tours late at night for disabled veterans from Walter Reed. I run into him in the corridors after everybody is gone, and it is dark outside. He is giving special, personalized tours to veterans and their families. He always stops and introduces them and asks if we will pose for a picture. Of course, it is the least we can do, and we agree to do it.

He came by last week to Senator HARRY REID's office and brought a young man from New Jersey. I believe his name was Ray. Ray had his young wife and beautiful little daughter with him, Kelsey. Kelsey was about 16 months old, 17 months old. She was running everywhere. She was just a bundle of energy and happy as could be, as her mother worried she might break something.

Ray was in a wheelchair. He had lost both of his legs and lost a few fingers on his left hand. He had served in Iraq. He came back and considered himself lucky. He talked about what he was going to do from this point forward. So many stories of bravery.

Tomorrow morning we will have a vote, and it will be our chance to speak as a Senate about this war. Some people will view it as just another routine vote, predictable outcome, and be on with their lives and head home for Thanksgiving. But for me, it is a chance, just a small chance, to return to a debate which I know consumes the hearts and minds of so many Americans.

I can't tell you how many people I run into, particularly the families of these soldiers, who want this war to

end. I want to, too. And tomorrow we will have a chance to do that.

Tomorrow we will have two votes. Senator MCCONNELL is going to try to move a spending bill which will provide \$70 billion for this war in Iraq with no strings attached. He will hand over this money, if he has his way, to President Bush, and we know what the outcome would be. The war would continue unchanged until this President walks out of office January 20, 2009. That is unacceptable to me, and I think it is unacceptable to many in this Chamber.

We have to change this war. We have to start bringing these troops home. We have to tell the Iraqis: We have given you as much time as you could reasonably ask for to build your country and govern your country and defend your country.

This morning's Washington Post has a front-page headline: "Iraqis Wasting An Opportunity, U.S. Officers Say." Wasting an opportunity. It is an opportunity created by the lives and blood of our soldiers, those who were there dying on the ground to give the Iraqis a chance, and our military leaders have said they are wasting an opportunity.

Brig. Gen. John F. Campbell, deputy commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division, complained last week that Iraqi politicians appear out of touch with everyday citizens. "The ministers, they don't get out," he said. "They don't know what the hell is going on on the ground." Soldiers standing, fighting, and dying while these political ministers twiddle their thumbs and waste their time—that is unacceptable. I cannot imagine how we can continue to ask our soldiers to walk into that hell hole in Iraq and risk their lives and come home severely injured while these Iraqi politicians cannot do the most basic things to put their country together.

If Senator MCCONNELL has his way tomorrow, we will hand this President \$70 billion and say: Mr. President, more of the same; just keep it coming. I will not be part of that.

There is a second choice. Senator HARRY REID, our Democratic majority leader, will offer a chance to provide \$50 billion to this President with the understanding that within 30 days, American soldiers start coming home in a meaningful way, with a goal that by the end of next year, all of our combat forces will be out of Iraq. There will be some remaining. It would not be a complete cutoff, but they will be there for specific reasons—to fight counterterrorism and to protect America's remaining civilian and military personnel, to train the Iraqis with a limited responsibility because we put so much into this so far.

I think that is the reasonable way to go. That bill we will vote on will also say that the President cannot send military units overseas until they are combat ready unless he certifies they are combat ready or gives good reason why they do not have to be combat ready.

I have been there. I have talked with these soldiers. Fifteen months is too long. We had a briefing just the other day from one of the leaders in the Ma-

rine Corps. He conceded that point. Fifteen-month deployments are too long to maintain the morale, to maintain the readiness, to separate these soldiers from their families for 15 months. He said something that will stick with me.

He said: Can you imagine what goes through your mind when you are a soldier on the ground in Iraq at Christmas, realizing you are going to be there for another Christmas? That is what these soldiers are facing. That is what this President has put us into, a situation where we have pushed our brave men and women to the limit.

Oh, support our troops and love our soldiers. Well, I do. I want to support our troops by bringing them home as soon as possible in an orderly, responsible way. Not what Senator MCCONNELL wants: to let this President continue with 187,000 American soldiers currently on the ground and no end in sight. That is unacceptable.

Some will say it is just another vote and nobody will notice. Maybe that is so. But for those of us who believe very strongly this war needs to come to an end, tomorrow morning is an opportunity. I hope the American people who can follow this debate through C-SPAN, who can follow our votes by referencing Congress on the Internet, will take a look at that rollcall tomorrow morning and will judge which Senators from which States want to change this policy in Iraq and see this war come to an end. We will have our chance tomorrow morning. It is a chance we should not miss.

For all those brave men and women who have served us so well in Iraq and those who may be called tomorrow, we owe them a "yes" vote on the Reid cloture motion tomorrow, and I will be voting that way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

THE FARM BILL

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I come here at 7:30 p.m. eastern time one more time to implore my colleagues, when we get to the cloture motion tomorrow on the 2007 farm bill, that we vote yes on that cloture motion. I fear if we do not move forward with that cloture motion on the farm bill tomorrow, there is a great possibility that the farm bill is, in fact, dead.

So many people have worked on this farm bill for such a long time—Senator HARKIN, who has led the effort as chairman of the committee; Senator CHAMBLISS, who has worked on this now for 3 years; Senator BAUCUS, who led the efforts in the Finance Committee with Senator GRASSLEY to provide a very robust package that is very important for the future of America. It is important that we move forward and we bring this matter to a close. The only way we are going to do that is if we get cloture tomorrow where people voted yes.

When we do that, what that will then set up is a postcloture timeframe

where germane amendments can then be considered to the farm bill, and we can move forward through an orderly process to bring the farm bill to a just conclusion.

For me, what is at stake, when I think about the farmers and ranchers in the San Luis Valley, across the eastern plains of Colorado and Weld County and Adams County and across the western slope, is the future of family farmers and family ranchers, many of whom work much harder than anybody in Washington, DC, or in America; for those farmers and ranchers know the day does not end at 5 or 6 o'clock in the evening. For most farmers and ranchers, their day ends at 10, 11, 12 o'clock at night. Their day begins long before people go to work here in Washington, DC. Their day begins at 4 and 5 in the morning when they get up to tend to the cows or when they get up to make sure they are baling their alfalfa, with dew still on the leaves of their alfalfa so that they have a quality product at the end of the day. Those are the men and women who really are the salt of the earth of America.

Those are the men and women, when you shake their hands, you know they are the hands of working men and women because you feel the calluses and the cuts. These are the men and women who, after they have worked for an entire year, wonder whether they are going to have enough money to pay off their operating line at the bank. These are the men and women who know the weather better than anybody here in Washington, DC, will ever know the weather and will be able to understand the seasons and the days better than most people who stand here on this floor and debate about the issues of the farm policy because these are the men and women who know, when they see a cloud of a certain color coming in their direction, that there is a hailstorm on the way, and they wonder whether or not that hailstorm is going to hit their field or their neighbor's field. They wonder whether they are going to be able to have enough at the end of the day to pay their operating expenses or their mortgage at the bank.

So it is the farmers and ranchers of rural America in all our States, Democratic States and Republican States—South Dakota, the State of my good friend who served with us on the Agriculture Committee and has contributed mightily to the content of this bill. It is all of those men and women in farm country whom we owe this to, to move forward with a process that brings about a conclusion to this farm bill, that sets an orderly process for us to consider amendments, both Republican and Democratic amendments, so that we can bring this legislation to a close.

For me, it is personal because I know many of these people. Many of these people are my family. I spent a lot of my own time as an irrigator on a farm, on a Heston windrower, on John Deere tractors and John Deere balers. I spent

a lot of time on a horse. So I know what the life of a farmer and a rancher is all about. But this legislation on the farm bill, Mr. President, is much more to America than just about these farmers and ranchers. Yes, it is important to stand up for them and for them to have champions here on the floor of the Senate, both on the Democratic side as well as on the Republican side. That is why it should not be even close as an issue in terms of us getting to a 60-vote margin tomorrow. It ought to be done easily because we ought to be champions for these people.

But it is more than about the farmers and ranchers in America. It is about a lot of other things. It is about making sure we embrace the clean energy economy of the 21st century. Nowhere in America is there more excitement and enthusiasm than there is in rural America today about how rural America will help us pioneer our way to energy independence the same as with Brazil, a Third World country, through a 20-year dedication to the cause of energy independence, to become energy independent. There is no reason why we in America cannot do the same thing if we put our minds to it and we have the courage to put the right policies in place. And rural America will play a very significant role in creating that energy independence.

This legislation we have brought to the floor of the Senate from both committees, the Finance Committee as well as from the Agriculture Committee, makes a very significant step in the right direction of getting us off the addiction of foreign oil and opening a new opportunity for energy security for America. When I look at the issue of energy, yes, we will be debating and be having votes on the issue of Iraq tomorrow, but part of why we are involved in these issues in the Middle East is because of the fact that oil has been a driver in our foreign policy. We ought not to let that ever happen again in America. We ought not to let oil be a driver in our foreign policy.

So as we embrace this ethic of a clean energy economy for the 21st century, that is part of what is at the heart of the farm bill in title IX. As we look at dealing with the environmental security of our globe, of this planet, that also is at the heart of this legislation. When we look at creating a new economic opportunity, a new tomorrow for rural America, that is also in this legislation.

But it goes beyond energy. It also deals with nutrition. We need to keep reminding the people who are critical of this farm bill that they are wrong because they are aiming at the wrong parts. They aim at the 14 percent of the bill that creates the support, the safety net for farmers and ranchers who are out there in the fields, but we have to recognize that it is almost 67 percent of the money that is set forth in this bill that goes into all the nutrition programs. Those nutrition programs help our children make sure they have the

food in their stomachs to be able to learn while they are in school. Those nutrition programs are the ones that help the most vulnerable here in America.

It goes beyond nutrition. It also deals with the issue of conservation and how we take care of our land and water. This bill is a very important step and makes a very important statement in making sure we help take care of the crown jewels of America with the best stewards of our land and water.

So if you are a champion of the farmers and ranchers of this country, you are going to vote yes on cloture on this bill tomorrow. If you are a champion for the new clean energy economy, you are going to vote yes on this cloture motion tomorrow. If you are a champion of taking care of those who are most in need, the most vulnerable in America in our nutrition programs, you are going to vote yes on this cloture motion tomorrow. If you are a champion and a fighter in protecting our land and water, then you will vote yes on this cloture motion tomorrow. Because it is only by getting to yes on this cloture motion tomorrow, with 60 votes, that we can then create the orderly process that can have us consider amendments that will improve this farm bill and get it across the finish line and then moving forward with the rest of the process to get it to the President's desk for signature.

Mr. President, tonight, I urge my colleagues to think about their vote tomorrow, and I ask them to vote yes on this very important motion that will come before us.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PASSAGE OF HEAD START CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am pleased to speak today about the conference report for the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007.

I appreciate the efforts of Chairman KENNEDY, as well as Senators ENZI, DODD and ALEXANDER, for working together to lead this effort.

This bipartisan legislation reauthorizes the Head Start program, something the Congress has not done since 1998.

In 1965, President Johnson launched a summer program for low-income children and their families called Project Head Start.

The program's mission was simple: to prepare low-income, preschool-aged children for success in school.

Today, Head Start serves children and their families in urban and rural areas across the United States.

Since its inception, more than 20 million children and families have benefited from the Head Start program.

Nevada's eight centers range from a Head Start and Early Head Start Center in rural Ely, to larger, more urban centers in Reno and Las Vegas, to a Tribal Head Start center in Gardnerville.

Each of these programs is unique, because they focus on the needs of children and their families in the communities they serve.

Today, more than 40 years since its inception, Head Start provides comprehensive early education and health services to almost 1 million low-income preschool children to help them prepare for and succeed in school.

Unfortunately, this is only a fraction of the number of children that could benefit from Head Start services.

In Nevada alone, nearly 10,000 3- and 4-year-olds are eligible for Head Start programs. But, last year, only about one quarter of those eligible were able to participate.

This legislation will expand access and eligibility for low-income children and families, which will open the doors to Head Start to tens of thousands of children in Nevada and across America.

The bill also makes a number of other important changes to the Head Start program.

It gives children the tools they need to start school by aligning Head Start standards and services with State and local school standards and requiring new research-based standards and assessments.

And, to ensure that Head Start programs are serving children as effectively as possible, the bill requires greater accountability through improved governance and recompetition for poor performing Head Start centers.

Finally, the bill strengthens the Head Start workforce by setting new education and training goals for Head Start teachers and curriculum specialists.

With proven and lasting results, Head Start is a wise investment in our future.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

• Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise to celebrate the passage of the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act to reauthorize the Head Start program yesterday. This legislation is a great accomplishment for the Congress and improves opportunities for nearly a million young children and their families. Head Start represents our understanding that our children must be a top priority. While as children represent one quarter of our population, they represent 100 percent of our future.

I would like to thank Senators KENNEDY, ENZI and ALEXANDER for their